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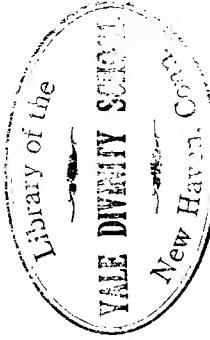
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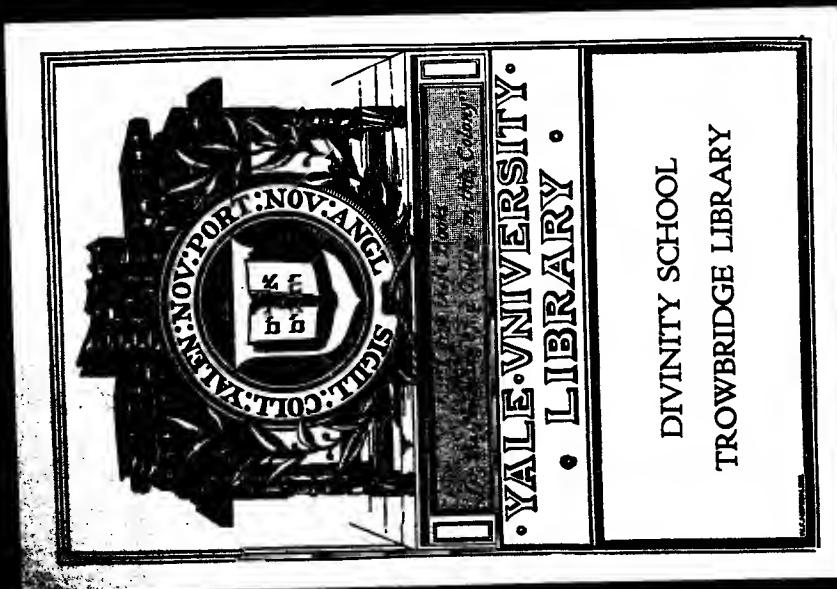
Facts and Documents

COLLECTED BY THE
STUDENT LEAGUE FOR
INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACY



112 EAST 19TH STREET
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FOREWORD

ON THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 20th, 350 Italian university students arrived here as Ambassadors of "good will" from the fascist regime of Mussolini. Their first stop was at Columbia University, where they were greeted by Dean Hawkes on behalf of Nicholas Murray Butler, while outside, Columbia students, including the Editor of the *Columbia Spectator*, were chased off the campus by police, for attempting to hold a meeting to protest the official greeting to ambassadors of a regime that has meant the death of intellectual life in Italy.

It has become pointedly evident, as these Italian students have toured the various eastern universities, that there is very slight knowledge and recognition of the fact that under Mussolini, teachers, students and writers have been suppressed as brutally and efficiently as they are at present under Hitler. The greatest writers, musicians and scholars of Italy have been insulted, harried and driven from their native land because of their courageous refusal to spread Fascist state doctrines which they considered false and deleterious. Students who do not belong to the Fascist Student Group cannot pass examinations. Instructors who refuse to join the Fascist Party stand no chance of promotion.

The Student League for Industrial Democracy believes it can render no greater service at the time of the visit of the 350 Italian students than to publish a plain, unadorned statement of what has happened to Italian Intellectuals under Fascism.

The significance of these documents lies in their proof that it is inherent in the nature of Fascist dictatorship to suppress freedom of thought as well as of action; to corrupt art, education, literature and science in the interests of its own ends; to determine what is true or false, what is good or bad, what is beautiful or ugly by how it helps perpetuate and glorify the Fascist state. We must not be revolted by Fascism in Germany only to ignore it in Italy. And to realize that the destructive intellectual policies of Italy and Germany are inherent in Fascism is to strengthen one's resolve to fight it here.

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Italian Intellectuals Under Fascism

I. The duty of the teacher under Fascism

IN 1928 Signor Paolo Orano, Member of Parliament and professor in the history of journalism at the university of Perugia, gave the following definition of the duties of the Italian teacher: "For Fascism such things do not exist as a philosophy independent of race, a culture without a nation, a world conception without an empire, knowledge which has no end but itself, a limbo for those intellectuals who are afraid to devote themselves to proselytizing. Italy does not care a rap for the disciples of Kant and of Nietzsche, of Gioberti and of Spaventa, of Bruno and of Rosmini. Fascist Italy wants Fascist proselytes. They must give their assent to all that is done by Fascism, as a regime and as a government, including the more and more severe measures against the enemies of Fascism, even those who, if they do not throw bombs and lay plots, certainly instigate them. All without exception must bear their part in the policy of Fascism, in private and in public, in every lecture room, from every pulpit. Woe to those who teach the youth of today that there is a culture which 'takes no interest in politics.'"¹

II. Why teachers are dismissed from their posts under Fascism

On October 6, 1926, Signor Agnello, a teacher in the secondary school at Cento in the province of Ravenna was dismissed from his post on the following grounds:

You have assumed an attitude incompatible with the general political tendencies of the Government: (i) by sending on January 10, 1925, a voluntary subscription to the paper "Il Popolo" (a Christian-Democratic organ), at the same time enclosing your greetings to its editor; (ii) by applying to an invitation to join the Fascist Association of Secondary School Teachers with the declaration that you had an heritage of convictions 1925 to "Il Mondo" (a liberal paper); (iv) by refusing, alone of all the

¹ "Regime Fascista," April 19, 1928. Gioberti, Spaventa, and Rosmini were Italian philosophers of the nineteenth century; Bruno was the philosopher burned at the stake as a heretic in 1600.

masters of your school and in spite of the request of your headmaster, to take part in the reception in honor of His Excellency the Undersecretary for Education; (v) by consistently maintaining an attitude hostile to the present regime.

This document dates back to 1926, when there still remained in Italy a few remnants of the old liberal regime, and people could write for papers free from government control. From November, 1926 on, no daily papers were left in which a teacher could collaborate even if he wanted to be dismissed, and the royal decrees of January 30, March 17, and April 7, 1927, and of June 26, 1928, empowered the Minister for Education to dismiss any elementary or secondary school teacher whenever he saw fit.

In March 1928, Signor Ricci, professor of economics in the University of Rome, was challenged by Signor Spirito, editor of the Fascist review, "Nuovi Studi di Diritto, d'Economia e di Politica," to give his opinion of Fascist economic doctrine. Not wishing to refuse the challenge for fear of being mistaken for a coward, he sent the editor a letter in which he criticized some of the doctrines and practices of the Government. Immediately the "Popolo d'Italia" published an article, in which it was not difficult to recognize Mussolini's style and which ended with the following question: since Professor Ricci is so enamored of liberty, "why not give it to him at once?" At the end of that academic year Professor Ricci was dismissed.

The Royal Decree of August 28, 1931, compelled all university professors to sign an oath, by which they swore "to exercise the function of teaching and to fulfill all academic duties with the purpose of forming active and valiant citizens devoted to the country and to the Fascist regime." Anti-Fascist teachers, especially those who by their great learning and their integrity had come to exercise a potent if silent influence over the student bodies, were thus forced to choose between abandoning their classrooms, their laboratories, their studies and in many cases being reduced to star-

vation, or humiliating themselves and losing the respect and confidence of their pupils.

On December 28, 1931, an official communiqué announced that eleven professors had refused to take the oath and had been dismissed; but it did not announce how many professors had resigned rather than be dismissed (e.g. Professor De Viti de Marco), how many had signed the formula with reservations that emptied it of any meaning (e.g. Professor Levi Civita), and how many "incaricati" (assistant professors) and "liberi docenti" (privat docten) had followed the example of the eleven full professors.

Even after this purge, the Fascists did not feel that they were safe in the universities. In 1932, one of the ablest economists in Italy, Signor Cabiati, professor at the Scuola Superiore in Genoa, published in the "Riforma Sociale," directed by Signor Luigi Einaudi, Senator, and professor at the University of Turin, an article in which he declared: "being accustomed today more than ever to think as a European, I look with chagrin upon the spiritual poverty, on the widespread envy of France, set upon especially because she has committed fewer financial mistakes than so many others." Shortly afterward, the newspaper "Il Tevere" pounced upon him, and many other journals followed the Roman paper's example: how was it possible that a man who "thought as a European" could be professor in an Italian University and paid with Italian lire?

We must keep an eye on the activities of certain professors hostile to Fascism, indeed traitors to the régime, all the more unworthy for having taken the oath of allegiance; these persons have their rendezvous in the so-called scientific and technical reviews, where they distill and put into circulation all the poison of anti-Fascism.

Professors must send to the Ministry a copy of everything they publish subsequent to the date of taking the oath. Whoever expounds doctrines contrary to those of the Fascist Party becomes a perjurer. Signor Carano Donvito, lecturer on economics in the

Business School ("Scuola Superiore di Commercio") at Bari, was dismissed in the spring of 1933 because in his lectures, as printed, he had not treated Malthus and his theories on population with that contempt which Mussolini has tried to inculcate in every faithful Fascist.

After March, 1933, it became impossible to become either an *incaricato* or a full professor without belonging to the Party. The oath which every member of the Party takes is "to serve with all his strength and, if necessary, with his blood, the cause of the Fascist revolution." To this general oath is added the special one for university teachers.

Full professors appointed before the new regulations came into effect and who still refuse to ask admittance to the Party, are no longer eligible to the offices of Rector, Dean, or member of the Supreme Council of National Education. They cannot serve on the committees that choose new professors, nor can they receive a call from a small university, where a young man serves his apprenticeship, to a larger one.

In October, 1933, the Secretary General of the Party ordered that from that time on Fascist students in the universities were to present themselves at the final examinations for their degrees wearing the black shirt. Soon afterwards, the Minister of Public Education decreed that Fascist professors could also don the black shirt for these examinations. The review "Gli Atenei," intended to educate the university student in the Fascist faith, commented on this ordinance as follows, in the issue of November 15, 1933:

"Thus we shall at least be able to look them in the face with the certainty of not mistaking those professors who are outside of the ranks because they are still rooted to the old tree of academic liberalism. In this way we shall be assured that we are not being educated by anti-Fascists.

On the same page was portrayed a student saying to a professor who was wearing the white shirt: "Your shirt is out of place here."

The "Stampa" of June 20, 1934, in publishing an official communiqué reminding the Fascist students of the obligation of wearing the black shirt to the final examination for their degrees, "deemed it advisable to add that the professors also would do well to don the black shirt" for that occasion.

III. Piero Gobetti

A young man of brilliant talent, Piero Gobetti, belonging as he did to a well-to-do family, was under no necessity of begging for an academic post from the Government, or of knocking at the door of some newspaper office in search of paid employment. In 1922 he embarked upon the publication at Turin of a weekly review, "Rivoluzione Liberale," political, historical and literary. He quickly gathered round him a group of high-minded and cultured young men. Soon he was in a position to start a publishing house, which came to have a large sale of books and reviews. In addition to his intellectual gifts he was endowed with sound business sense. But he was a liberal; the tendency of his review was liberal and the books he published were liberal. In March, 1923, Mussolini ordered the Prefect of Turin to "see to it that life was made difficult for this stupid adversary of the Government and of Fascism." The phrases "to make life difficult" and "to make life impossible" are technical expressions of the Fascist language: the first means to subject an enemy to all possible violence short of killing him, while the latter is practically an order to send him as soon as possible to a better world. A year later, on February 22, 1924, Mussolini personally gave an order to three Fascists at Turin to "act with the greatest energy" so as to give Gobetti a "good Fascist lesson". Life became for Gobetti an absolute hell; his house was repeatedly invaded and looted, he himself was several times beaten up and as

a result developed serious heart trouble. In November 1925 his review was suppressed and the Chief of Police informed him that "in consequence of his relentlessly anti-national activity" he must shut down his printing business. Learning that the Fascists were seeking him with a view to a fresh assault, Gobetti, though suffering from influenza, fled to France on February 4, 1926, in the most bitter weather, leaving behind him in Turin his young wife and a baby of one month. He had hardly arrived in Paris when he had to enter a hospital, where he died on February 16 at the age of 25. For three years his friends in Italy carried on his work, publishing a purely literary review, "Il Baretti," and keeping the publishing business going. On November 25, 1928, Gobetti's house and the book store went up in flames. The review was suppressed in the following January by order of the Government.

IV. Guglielmo Ferrero

In the autumn of 1925 Signor Ferrero, the noted historian and political writer, was placed by the Florentine Fascists on the list of those whose houses were to be looted. Being informed by a friend of the danger threatening him, he sent a protest both to the Prefect of the province and to the central authorities in Rome. As the matter concerned a man who was well known abroad, his house was spared. In November 1926, he was not allowed to go to Geneva to lecture on historical subjects. In February, 1927, he could not come to the United States. The "Popolo d'Italia," March 1, 1927, wrote:

Signor Ferrero is an anti-Italian, an anti-Roman, and an anti-Fascist. He is against all that is alive and strong in the Italy of today. He certainly would go to America in order to make money out of Free-masonry in a tour of anti-Italian propaganda. Fascism is generous but it is not entirely stupid.

In August, 1927, Ferrero was invited to take part in a conference on the population problem held at Geneva. He could not go for

¹ Proof for these statements are given in Salvemini's *The Fascist Dictatorship in Italy*, p. 295.

the reasons explained to the Executive Committee of the Conference in his letter of August 27:

It would have been a great pleasure to have come to so important a gathering and one at which so many scholars will be present. But, by refusing me a passport, the government prevents me from going abroad. This letter, however, did not deter the Italian embassy in Paris from issuing the following official communiqué to the "Figaro":

There has been an attempt to spread the rumor abroad that Guglielmo Ferrero is prevented by the Italian government from attending the conference at Geneva. Such a rumor is without foundation. Ferrero is living quietly in Florence, and has not shown the slightest intention of leaving it.

The police surveillance around his house became so annoying that the landlord finally gave Ferrero notice to quit. With his family he withdrew to his country house near Florence, where police vigilance followed him. He could not take a walk without the company of two policemen. If he went for a motor drive a policeman sat beside the chauffeur, and another car with other policemen followed him closely wherever he went. Letters addressed to him were opened by the postal censorship. A civil servant who in one of these private letters thus read by the censorship criticized the Government, was dismissed. Foreigners who wrote to him to say they were going to visit him, were warned by *their own governments* that they would do well to give up their project. Those persons who received visits from Ferrero were summoned to the local Party headquarters, asked to reveal what Ferrero had said, and admonished not to receive him again.

The "Ferrero affair" was brought before the Senate by Senator Ciccotti on May 30, 1928:

There is an Italian writer kept under surveillance because of the fear that he may go abroad. I am told that the surveillance to prevent this writer from leaving costs the public twenty-five thousand lire a month. This figure might seem excessive, but many senators know that for the surveillance of this citizen the police keep a special automobile and no less than a dozen officers who are necessary for day and night service.

Undersecretary of State Bottai, interrupted Senator Ciccotti

saying: "I believe that this writer desires to be under surveillance." To which Senator Ciccotti rejoined:

I leave to Signor Bottai the responsibility of that affirmation; at any rate, even granted that it is the writer himself who desires this surveillance, that is not a good reason for saddling upon the Italian tax-payer the expense of three hundred thousand lire a year to satisfy that desire. Why does the Italian government not let him go abroad?

Bottai answered: "Because he would do there what the others are doing." Ciccotti concluded: "Have you succeeded by such surveillance and such coercion in confining those who are now abroad and who seem to give you so much annoyance?"

It was not until the spring of 1931 that Signor Ferrero was permitted to leave Italy and settle down at Geneva.

V. Arturo Toscanini

Arturo Toscanini, the greatest orchestral conductor of the present day, was assaulted by the Fascists at Bologna on May 14, 1931, for having refused to open his concert with the Fascist hymn. The Roman daily "La Tribuna," of May 20, referring to the incident, remarked that "a box on the ear (it was in reality a case of many blows) may sometimes provoke salutary effects, and foremost of all, that of re-affirming resoundingly that the petty formula of art for art's sake is no longer tolerable." The Secretary of the Fascist Party in the province of Bologna, who had been responsible for this heroic "punitive operation" on a man of 65, explained that it was "irrevocably and absolutely necessary to recall Signor Toscanini from heaven to earth":

It is our ineradicable conviction that art, science and culture, gifts which nature has conferred with special generosity upon our country, may and must be represented throughout the world only by those who are purely and definitely Italian.¹

The following is the manner in which the weekly review "Libro

¹ "Resto del Carlino", October 30, 1931.

e Moschetto," the aim of which is to promote the political and cultural education of the "Young University Fascists" (GUF), saw fit to comment on the happy event:

I take Arturo Toscanini, doubtless not the offspring of dogs, suckled as all other babes are —; I take the boy, brought up on Italian bread grown by our honest peasants, taken for walks on Italian streets; I take the man, an eye-witness in his declining years of our faith, our heroism, our intelligence, a little superior to his own puny brain, and our humility; I take the celebrated conductor who, after death, is destined to rot, like other men, in his grave; I take the reptile whose spirit is already putrefying, and who is incapable of the sublime pride of inculcating into his sons sentiments of respect and gratitude to their native land, sentiments which are due and which no one could or should forget; I take the stupid, obstinate and invertebrate neorathenic; I take by the ears that being more disgusting than intelligent, weak in his nervous system, whether central or peripheral, more monster than genius; I take that unscrupulous, bare-faced, shameless —; I take that human ruin whom many people at home and abroad would like to make the sewer of their acidulous, putrefying, hysterical rage; I take this definite fool —; I observe the imprint which was left by the Bolognese box on his ear; I feel for him the sympathy which he deserves, and I spit in his eyes.¹

After the assault suffered in Bologna, Toscanini was subjected to police surveillance in Milan. He was informed that should he require a passport, he must write a letter to Mussolini acknowledging that he had never been maltreated. This Toscanini refused to do. It was only under the pressure of foreign protests that his passport was finally granted.

VI. Benedetto Croce

During the night of October 31, 1926, a band of Fascists broke into his house and smashed up several rooms. In 1928 the publication of his *History of Italy from 1870 to 1915* let loose a stream of insults in all the Fascist press. The history closed with 1915 and Fascism was never mentioned, but the Fascist charged Croce with reviling the memory of Crispi, a precursor of Mussolini, not being able to attack Mussolini in person, and with having put nationalism

¹ Many expressions in this invective are so vulgar and foul that they had either to be altered or suppressed outright.

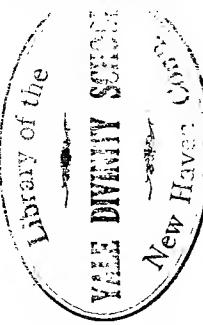
on trial, not being able to condemn Fascism. "It would not have been a bad thing to give him the sensation that Fascism is arbiter of the fate of its enemies and does not spare scoundrels!" In April, 1928, the staff of the magazine "Pietre" was arrested in a body because it had published a favorable review of the *History of Italy*; the magazine consequently died from lack of contributors. After the speech which Croce delivered in the Senate, May 25, 1929, criticizing the Lateran Agreements between Pius XI and Mussolini, a group of intellectuals in Turin sent him a letter of congratulation; this letter was opened by the postal censorship, the leader of the demonstration Signor Cosmo, was interned on the island of Lipari, and a teacher in a secondary school, Signora Alanson, was dismissed from her post. In July, 1929, in an interview granted to "Monde," a French weekly edited by Barbusse, Croce deplored that literature in Italy had been reduced to extinction. Croce had given the interview to a "French review, an enemy of Italy and of Fascism."²

It would have been most reprehensible to print in Italy such an anti-Italian example of cultural, intellectual, and moral decadism. But what can be said when one harms one's own country before strangers? No condemnation is too severe for such a crime.

The review "Viglie Letterarie" was suspended for several months for having rejoiced in its March 1930, number (p. 121) at the receipt of a letter of encouragement from Croce. On September 3, 1930, Croce gave a lecture at the International Congress of Philosophy held at Oxford on the "anti-historic spirit," i.e., on that form of mental disintegration which "idolizes a future without a past, a going forward that is a leap in the dark, a will which is caprice, an ardor which in order to preserve its impetuosity makes itself blind." Not a word about Italy, not a word on Fascism. But the Fascist philosopher, Signor Gentile, in an address on December

¹ "Impero," March 8, 1928.

² "Giornale d'Italia," July 10, 1929.



5, 1930, denounced Croce for having, while abroad defamed Fascism and its ideals:

For years he has given himself no rest. His incorrigible political passivity bursts forth, fed by pseudo-philosophical preconceptions and personal acrimony. In fact, he did not mention Fascism. He called it "anti-History." This anti-history is easy enough to identify. It bases, he says, "its ideals upon laws and institutions which suppress all individual initiative and hence all competition, rivalry and struggle in order to impose a rule." In short, the very picture of Fascism as seen by anti-Fascists. "Fascism," or rather "the anti-history of today," is, he says, "an outbreak of unbridled egoism and of the cruel joy of commanding and seems to be celebrating some satanic orgy." This is a fine portrait he paints of us. If we say that our immediate origins are to be traced to the War, our philosophical enemy also is of the opinion that we must go back to the war if we wish to understand the anti-history of today. But what is his war? It is the war that cut down the flower of our youth, "of the most courageous, the most generous, the most intelligent youth"; it is the war that cultivated the "tendency towards violence, military discipline and command, and the habit of civil strife"; it was the war which lowered and undid all habits of critical judgment. Was there ever conjured up a more sinister, a more psychologically false, more morally defeatist vision of the War? What kind of Fascism could have sprung from such a War? Intellectual impoverishment, moral weakness, aimless exaltation, despair, mental disorders, in short, a disease which is to be overcome like all diseases, by patience and constancy. He took this anguish to the Oxford Congress, perhaps there to find consolation for his grief, perhaps to invoke the judgment of history. He forgot that it is not at Oxford that Italian History is made.¹

During the congress of the Fascist Institutes of Culture, held at Rome in November, 1931, Signor Cian, a senator and also professor at the University of Turin, moved an order of the day which demanded the necessary repressive measures against those reviews in which "anti-national defeatism is at work under the appearance of an innocent agnostic cultural activity: philosophic, historical, or literary." He refrained from mentioning any review by name but everyone knew that the resolution was aimed at the "Critica" edited by Croce, against whom Cian has long nursed a bitter personal hatred. In the spring of 1933, the review "Educazione Nazionale" was compelled to cease publication for having written in defense of Croce against a pamphlet attacking him.² Croce's *Brev-*

iario d'Estetica was excluded from all secondary schools in the summer of 1933. His "Critica" is so widely read outside Italy that Mussolini has not dared suppress it, but it cannot print a single word in which one could detect any critical intention against Fascism. As it is, in the summer of 1933, all national, provincial, and communal libraries received an order to cease subscribing to the review. The result was that many of those who had been in the habit of reading it in the public libraries were compelled to subscribe individually; and the "Critica's" circulation went up. Not daring to suppress the "Critica," the Government vindicated itself by suppressing another review, of lesser reputation, of which Croce was the animating spirit: the "*Bullettino di Storia Patria del Mezzogiorno.*"

When men such as Ferrero, Toscanini, and Croce have to endure such treatment, it is easy to imagine how much "intellectual liberty," to use Signor Marconi's phrase, is enjoyed by those who, eager to live the life of the spirit, but neither possessed of worldly goods, nor protected by an international reputation, refuse to sell their own souls.

VII. Censorship on books

No publisher would dare to place on the market a book which combated the doctrines, the practices, or the members of the Party in power. In 1926 the Florentine publisher, Signor Vallecchi, had ready for issue the second volume of the *Pagine e Ricordi Parlamentari* of Senator Giustino Fortunato, a man of seventy-eight, highly esteemed in Italy for his moral integrity and for his superior intelligence. When the author sent in the preface, in which he had set forth his reasons for being an opponent of Fascism, the publisher refused to publish it, and the book appeared without it.

In January 1929, the Secretary General of the Party decided that the censorship spontaneously exercised by the publishers of books and periodicals was not rigid enough to protect the Régime

¹ "Educazione Fascista," December, 1930.

² "Educazione Fascista," December, 1930.

against dangerous thoughts, and ordered all publishing firms to submit to the provincial Secretary of the Party for approval the manuscripts or proofs of all books dealing with political matters. When the Secretary felt any doubt as to whether a certain book should be allowed to appear, the final judgment was to be given by the headquarters of the Fascist Party in Rome.

A writer must conform not only to the economic, social, and political doctrines of the Fascist Party, but also to those of the Catholic Church. An encyclopedia is now being published in Italy under the direction of the Fascist philosopher, Signor Gentile. In 1929, Signor Omodeo, professor at the University of Naples, who had been requested to write an article on the History of the Church, was surprised to find, when correcting the proofs of his article "Apostles," that the text had been altered to give it an orthodox Catholic tendency. He protested to Signor Gentile, who promised that the original text would be restored. However, when the article was published, it had become several shades more orthodox than the proofs. The author protested against this abuse of his name. Signor Gentile withdrew behind a dignified silence. In his place appeared the Jesuit Father, Tacchi Venturi, who declared that he had corrected the text "according to instruction received from his superiors." The firm in Turin that publishes a "Dizionario Encyclopedico" has to submit the text of the work to the ecclesiastical censorship of a Father Sisto Colombo.

VIII. Confiscation of books

In spite of the prudence displayed by publishers and censors in examining manuscripts, it is not always possible to guess where danger may lurk. As a consequence it sometimes happens that dangerous contraband is smuggled into print. The police thereupon

¹ "Corriere della Sera," January 29, 1929. "Current History Magazine," January, 1931, p. 538.

put matters aright by confiscating the book.¹ The work of the Fascist Giorgio Quartara on the *United States of Europe*, published by the firm of Bocca at Turin, during the spring of 1930, was confiscated two days after it had been placed on sale because it was too much imbued with the internationalistic spirit. The publication of a book on the World War by General Bencivenga was forbidden in 1931, because Bencivenga was a liberal, confined on the island of Ponza. General Cavaciocchi's posthumous memoirs on the World War were banned in 1931, because they contained revelations which conflicted with the official version compiled by the General Staff of the Army; the manuscript was bought by the Government and disappeared. In 1933, the second edition of Ludwig's *Talks with Mussolini* disappeared because the book contained affirmations which Pius XI threatened to condemn as heretical. A third edition, expurgated, replaced the second; but in its preface Ludwig continued to repeat that he had scrupulously reproduced every word of Mussolini's without additions or omissions.

In the spring of 1934, a novel by the authoress Mura was forbidden because it painted family life in rather pessimistic colors. A book by C. E. Gadda was forbidden because it was depressing. One of Marinetti's books was forbidden because it was anticlerical. In the film based upon Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables*, the entire third part, entitled "Liberty, dear Liberty," was suppressed as—an act of prudence. The *Diario di Guerra* of Leonida Bissolati, who had been a Cabinet Minister during the World War, was suppressed, although the publisher had submitted the manuscript to the censorship and had obtained the *nihil obstat*. When the book

¹ Statement of Signor Solmi, Professor of Law at the University of Milan, and Under Secretary for Public Education, in the Chamber, March 14, 1933: "Our legislation has set up all necessary means of supervision over publications of all types, and provides for the confiscation of those works which are contrary to the national order of the State or which offend the dignity and prestige of the nation or of its authorities or are immoral or indecent. The officials concerned have always and will always avail themselves of those means with satisfactory results."

had been printed and was ready to be put on the market, a new order from above revoked the permit. It was rumored in Italy that Mussolini had granted the permit and then revoked it in order to kill two birds with one stone: forbid publication and at the same time cause the publisher, a son of Senator Einaudi's to lose the 150,000 lire which he had invested in the printing. An opera by Malipiero on a libretto by Pirandello, entitled "*Il Figlio Cambiato*," was forbidden by Mussolini's order, after the first performance, because—it was whispered in Italy—the plot resembled an episode in the family history of Mussolini.

IX. Forbidden books

Booksellers are warned that they will get into difficulties if they are caught selling books which have been ordered to disappear from circulation. The *Machiavelli* of Ettore Janni, which has been translated into English, is forbidden in Italy because in the scorn displayed by Janni for a certain type of provincial pseudo-machiavelianism, the truer and greater Machiavelli now governing Italy saw an allusion to himself. Two books in which Umberto Zanotti Bianco described the frightful conditions found in Basilicata and Calabria cannot be sold because the Italians must never waver in their conviction that Italy, thanks to Mussolini, has become the most prosperous and the happiest country in the world.

Severely prohibited are all books published on Fascism by Italians who have taken refuge abroad, or by foreign writers who do not judge favorably the achievements of Mussolini. In the autumn of 1930, Monsieur Lucien Fabre, a French man of letters, was obliged to cross northern Italy on the Paris-Bucharest express. He had had the unfortunate idea of taking along with him to read on the train *Dictators and Dictatorship*, by Count Sforza. At Domodossola, the book was discovered by Fascist soldiers. Why was he taking that book along with him? Did he intend to give it to someone in Italy?

They forced him to leave the train . . . and caused him to lose it. He was finally allowed to leave Italy, but only under the watchful eyes of two guards who accompanied him and the book as far as the frontier of Yugoslavia.¹

The Italian version of *All Quiet on the Western Front*, by Remarque, prepared by the publishing firm of Mondadori in 1929, was sequestered because it destroyed the romantic halo about the World War. It was allowed to circulate in French, but when it transpired that French copies were sold in great numbers, the French edition was also prohibited. The German text is still in circulation, since knowledge of German is not very widespread in Italy. The publishers of the Italian edition finally obtained permission to sell it, but only abroad. In 1929, Ossendowski's *Lenin: God of the Godless* was banned. The translation of the French novel *Catherine among the Soldiers*, by Adrienne Thomas, was confiscated. The translator, a one hundred per cent Fascist, rushed to Signore Starace, Secretary General of the Party to ask him to lift the ban. "It is an anti-Fascist book." "Not in the slightest!" "Thomas Mann is an anti-Fascist!" It was then necessary to explain to him that Thomas Mann is a male and German, while Adrienne Thomas is a female and French. Monsieur Rosenstock-Franks book, *L'Economie Corporative* is not allowed to be sold in Italy. One of the author's French friends, who tried to get the book from a bookseller, was rebuked for his audacity—as for an act subject to legal penalties.

In July, 1929, the Government became anxious about the "phenomenon of the sale on a large scale and at very low prices, of works by Russian and American writers, the perusal of which might be harmful to the people." Publishers and bookseller were warned by the police not to print or sell the works of Gorky, Gogol, Turgenev, Tolstoi, Dostoievsky, Jack London, and other such worthless fel-

¹"L'Oeuvre," Paris, December 20, 1930.

lows. The publishers complained that this provision would cause them to lose the money they had advanced for the printing of so many books. Consequently, the Government resolved that the ban should be revoked on books sold at "normal prices," but should remain on those books sold at lower prices, because "there is every reason to suspect that such sales aim at illicit ends."¹ What is the "normal price" of one of Tolstoi's books? That all depends on the personal judgment of the censor and on his more or less disinterested friendship for one publisher rather than for another.

The Government has not yet seen the need to adopt a "legal preventive supervision," suggested even for translations. "In substance," explained the Under Secretary of Education, March 14, 1933, "preventive supervision is today entrusted to the vigilant responsibility and the vivid realization of national exigencies by the publishers themselves."

X. The duties of the Italian abroad

A circular issued on April 28, 1928, warned Italian officials of international organizations, such as the League of Nations, and official delegates from Italy to International congresses, as well as those who take part in these congresses "in their own interest" that they must "submit in advance" for the approbation of the Central Institute of Statistics all unpublished data and statistical information of official origin. To this obligation are also subject "those Italian citizens who request this data and information for, or in the interest of foreign institutions or persons".² In another circular, June 10, 1931, Mussolini warned students of economics and statisticians that "the responsibility for all statistical data to be used both at home and abroad has been assumed" by the Central Institute of Statistics, and that in consequence the representatives of

¹ "Corriere della Sera," August 9, 1929.
² "Annali di Statistica," Series VI, Vol. I, p. 122.

Italy to international congresses of statistics "must address themselves to the Central Institute of Statistics to obtain from it information concerning the possibility of collecting and furnishing certain given statistics". In everyday language this means that these delegates must be careful not to put into circulation data that disagree with those manufactured by the Central Institute of Statistics which works under the express orders of Mussolini. Paragraph 5 of the Act of December 6, 1926, which has become Paragraph 269 of the Fascist Penal Code of July 1, 1931, punishes with imprisonment of from 5 to 24 years "any citizen who, outside the territory of the State, divulges or communicates in any way whatsoever rumors or news which are false, exaggerated, or misleading, concerning the internal conditions of the State, in such a way as to diminish the credit or the prestige of the State abroad, or who displays in any way whatsoever activity detrimental to national interests." For less serious cases there is Paragraph 262 of the new Penal Code, which threatens with imprisonment for not less than three years "whoever reveals news the divulgence of which has been forbidden by competent authorities."

XI. At the P.E.N. Club

The International Congress of the Club of Poets, Essayists, and Novelists (P.E.N. Club), which was held in Edinburgh on June 19, 1934, discussed a resolution voicing apprehension at continual attempts at encroachment upon liberty of expression. Signor Marinetti, inventor of Futurism and a member of the Italian Academy, "urged that the P.E.N. Club should avoid politics," forgetting for the moment that Fascist doctrine forbade writers and artists to avoid politics. Moreover, he informed the Congress that "in the P.E.N. Club in Italy they were delighted to admit all writers, both Fascists and those who did not actually fight against Fascism";

² "Corriere della Sera," June 11, 1931.

but he forgot to inform his auditors concerning the fate of those who did actually fight. The Belgian delegate, Mr. Piérard, could not passively swallow such an audacious misstatement and asserted that an Italian writer had had his house surrounded and his books taken away, *which Signor Marinetti denied*. Mr. Piérard then went on to allege that the former secretary of the Italian P.E.N. Club had been obliged to go into exile and that four other writers had been attacked. Signor Marinetti thereupon mounted the platform and, *shaking his finger in Mr. Piérard's face*, emphatically denied the allegation. When a vote was taken on the resolution, the Italian delegation voted against it, thus furnishing conclusive proof that it felt no apprehension as regards attempts at encroachment upon liberty of expression.

When Signor Marinetti contradicted Monsieur Piérard's statement, he ignored that in the city of Naples alone, on the one night of October 30-31, 1926, the houses of Benedetto Croce, Arturo Labriola, and of Roberto Bracco were invaded by Fascists. Croce's books were not seriously damaged, because Croce explained to the invaders that he had already arranged for his library to pass at his death to the city of Naples and that therefore anyone who harmed it would be destroying city property. But Labriola's and Bracco's books were thrown out the windows.

We have derived our information concerning the collision which took place between Signor Marinetti and Monsieur Piérard at Edinburgh, from the account published in the "Times" on June 21, 1934. Here is the way in which the incident was reported by the "Corriere della Sera" on June 20, 1934:

The meeting of the International P.E.N. Club took place at Edinburgh. The representatives of thirty nations were present, among them some of the world's greatest writers. As at previous meetings, a group of writers attempted to introduce a political element into the discussion by bringing charges against the Italian literary world of the post-war period. With

an eloquence that swept all before it, the Italian academician, F. T. Marinetti, foiled the manoeuvre! His speech was received with thunderous applause.

This is the sort of information which is given to the Italian people concerning events outside Italy.

The Student League for Industrial Democracy is anxious to collect further material on the subject of this pamphlet and on the fate of intellectuals generally under Fascism. Especially do we want to know of any discrimination against teachers and students in this country. We shall appreciate any contribution a reader makes